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# A SOLDIER SON



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## THE ENLISTMENT

Ten golden Suns of August then had lit  
An angry world incarnadined with blood,  
When you before me—avocation quit,  
A little strange and pale and thoughtful—stood  
Avowing some new feeling was awake  
In you ; a Duty called ; for England's sake

You fain would Serve, and bravely. Whereupon  
My heart thrilled as a woman's soul is thrilled,  
When new life stirs within her. I a Son  
Possessed who England's Son was ! One fulfilled  
With that divine desire heroes guard  
Till Deeds or Death bring glorious reward.

## THE ENLISTMENT—CONTINUED

An eager hand-grip ! Passed the thrill of Pride !  
There rose before me scenes where human gore,  
Like poppies, splashed the harvest, and the tide  
Of combat rolled with steel-slash, cannon's roar,  
And fiendish din ; and there I saw you, wild,  
Inhuman furious : I became a child !

One moment only ! Instant you were Knight  
Again, chivalrous champion of the Right.

## A SOLDIER SON

Now every fear is past—  
Your chosen lot is cast  
Amid the sturdy few  
Who will the race renew,  
With qualities that shone,  
In glorious days bygone,  
At Crecy, Poitiers,  
And just one hundred years  
Ago at Waterloo.

A soldier you !  
Oh ! the pride to give a soldier son  
To England now,  
When all of good repute  
By savage brute  
Is trampled on,  
And England's children fight  
To save the Right,  
The True !

## A SOLDIER SON—CONTINUED

Go ! and whate'er betide,  
Nothing may quench this burning pride !  
A soldier son  
Is worth a million won  
Of gold,  
Or fame or treasure old.  
All, all is dross  
And gloss  
Beside a soldier son of England's mould !

## YOUR COMPANY

My heart leaps up when I see you marching  
Down the dusty road beneath the warm September  
Sky ;

And I guess that up above, behind the welkin's arching,  
Bides a God who knows your cause and feels as proud  
as I,

As He shines in your faces and girds up your strength,  
And vows this valiant justice shall conquer at length.

I smile and swell with pride as I hear you singing,  
Rolling any chorus that brightens up the way ;  
I lift my hat more reverent when I hear your Hurrahs  
ringing,

As you greet the floating flag that is symbol of our  
sway ;

And I pant with eager hope when I mark in your eyes  
The gallantry with power that in England never dies.

On ! Press on ! The savage foe is quaking,  
May the coward hear the tramping of your feet !  
Soon shall he know that Sport's a soldier's making  
Better than the Goose-step, or KNEIP' or FECHTEN feat.  
On ! Press on ! Clean of limb, endowed with might,  
Then back to us with glory, the glory of the Right.



## THE SILENCE

When Silence rose all Spectre-wise,  
Grimacing News behind the censored phrase,  
I saw the tragic guise  
Of those dread days ;  
And, as I looked, my gaze met yours,  
Asking what tokened those grimaces of the Silence-  
spectre.

Our eyes met, but no words were ours ;  
And then I marked your lips, as those of Hector,  
Close in fixed resolution : Dumb, they spake ;  
And, dumb, to them I gave reply :—  
' Nothing shall daunt us, nothing stay, until we break  
This Rush of Savagery.'

But, as Fort upon Fort yielded its strength  
To conquering hordes and science-work,  
There was at length  
A shade of something that would lurk  
Upon your face, akin despair ;  
Until the Rally and the great Surprise

Britain had wrought for Europe's eyes  
Upon the Marne :  
Then, once more, the world seemed fair.  
You said : ' With this for foretaste we may warn  
The ruthless how the flavour is  
Of ultimate defeat.'  
Oh ! those were days of great high spirits,  
Reaching a level scarcely touched  
Through any later feat.

And, something furtively, I watched you train,  
With growing gratitude, all conscious that in you  
Was mirrored England, that, with might and main,  
Strained to accomplish what  
A Giant wills to do.

## DEFEAT

‘ Serious Reverse,’  
The Newsboys bleat ;  
And all is grey  
In house and street.

‘ Serious Reverse ’ :  
And heart is lead ;  
And mind is mist ;  
Yet—is hope dead ?

‘ Serious Reverse ’ :  
Wait but a while,  
And you shall wear  
The Victor’s smile.

From sad Reverse,  
From smart and blow—  
It is God’s way—  
All victories flow.

## A CASUALTY—KILLED!

You will have heard the news of Arnold, too ;  
The last great news, the glorious end,  
I well recall when you first called him friend,  
And led him to me, as a son should do,

Hoping approval. Ah, what father who  
Would not give thanks if fate should haply send  
A comrade for a son, apt to forfend  
All evil, live the good, the eternal true !

But now I praise in more exalted strain !  
He that his blood shed there on alien soil  
Gave life for mine—saviour of women he,  
And children ! What are our sweat and toil  
Comparable with this ! My son's friend he—  
O glorious thought—who lost for England's gain !

# VICTORY

A little victory ;  
Some trenches won—  
A thing so slight  
Under the Sun !

A little victory ;  
A tiny leap—  
You know not if  
To laugh or weep.

A little victory ;  
Yet angels sing  
Te Deums there  
Where God is King.

A little victory ;  
Some Right re-won—  
Is no small thing,  
Under the Sun.

## UNDER ORDERS

No shouting heralded the word  
As through the ranks it swiftly went ;  
But a low murmur such as trees  
Indulge, when grateful summer's spent.

A murmuring of seasoned wills  
Bent upon Hellish wrong's redress !  
A Diapason sound from Deep  
To Deep, presaging storm and stress.

Then each to his allotted place  
For sleep. You say your fancy heard  
The air beat by a thousand wings  
That night. I could not doubt your word.

## ADIEU

Adieu !  
What need of tears  
Or fears,  
For you !

Adieu !  
This is no common day—  
Your feet upon the way  
All Knights of old have trod,  
All Saints hacked through to God,  
Your soul shall catch  
Their glinting glory ;  
While from afar I watch  
How you shall match  
Their story.  
Adieu !

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